

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COPENH 01755 251743Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 1755

SUMMARY:. THE LEFTIST SOCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY (SPP) HAS BEEN UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE AS RESULT OF SHARPENING STRUGGLE BETWEEN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND COMMUNISTS FOR POWER WITHIN LABOR MOVEMENT. FOLLOWING ITS SEVERE LOSS IN LAST PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, THE SPP HAS CHANGED LEADERSHIP AND EMBARKED ON ACTIVE CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND ITS INFLUENCE WITHIN LABOR MOVEMENT. DESPITE THIS EFFORT SPP'S TRADE UNION STRONGHOLDS HAVE BEGUN TO DISINTEGRATE AND THE PARTY IS CLEARLY RUNNING SCARED.
END SUMMARY.

1. THE SPP'S UNEXPECTEDLY HEAVY LOSS IN DECEMBER 4 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION (11 SEATS COMPARED TO 17; 6.0 AS COMPARED TO 9.1 PER CENT OF VOTE IN SEPTEMBER 1971 ELECTION) HAS PROMPTED THE PARTY INTO RADICAL EFFORTS TO ALTER ITS IMAGE. THE PARTY HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN COMPRISED LARGELY OF LEFT-WING INTELLECTUALS, AND, THOUGH PROCLAIMING ITSELF A "LABOR PARTY", HAS HAD ONLY A FEW SOLID STRONGHOLDS WITHIN THE LABOR MOVEMENT, THE BREWERY WORKERS IN COPENHAGEN, AND LOCAL SECTIONS AMONG THE SHIPYARD WORKERS AT HELGØR AND COPENHAGEN SHIPYARDS.

2. THE DIVERGENT INTERESTS OF THE PARTY'S INTELLECTUAL AND LABOR GROUPS HAVE BEEN ACCENTUATED DURING PAST TWO YEARS, HOWEVER, AND
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 COPENH 01755 251743Z

CONSTITUTE NOW A FUNDAMENTAL CLEAVAGE WITHIN THE PARTY. THE PAR-

LIAMENTARY GROUP, HEADED BY UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR MORTON LANGE, HAS BEEN ENTIRELY COMPOSED OF REPS FROM INTELLECTUAL WING, A FACT THAT RECENTLY PROMPTED FORMATION OF A COMPETITIVE POWER CENTER WITHIN THE PARTY, THE TRADE UNION COMMITTEE HEADED BY OLE HENRIKSEN, A SECRETARY IN THE METALWORKERS UNION.

3. THIS CLEAVEAGE HAS ALSO RESULTED IN OPPOSING VIEWS ON PARTY POLICY. HENRIKSEN AND HIS TRADE UNION COMMITTEE CONDEMNED SPP'S ALLIANCE WITH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP) DURING 1971-73 AS REASON FOR PARTY'S ELECTORAL LOSS, AND DEMANDED A POLICY OF OPPOSITION IN PARLIAMENT COMBINED WITH ACTIVE, REVOLUTIONARY AGITATION ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT. PRIOR TO PARTY'S CONGRESS, MAY 11-12, COMMITTEE PROPOSED, IN FACT, ESTABLISHMENT OF POLITICAL ACTION FUND TO FINANCE "ILLEGAL" STRIKES AND DEMANDED INDEPENDENT RIGHT TO DETERMINE SPP POLICY ON ALL QUESTIONS AFFECTING LABOR MARKET.

4. PARTY LEADERSHIP, HARD PRESSED AT PARTY CONGRESS TO DEFEND ITS "REFORM-ORIENTED" ALLIANCE WITH SP IN VIEW OF ELECTION LOSS, PLACE ONUS FOR THAT POLICY ON PARTY CHAIRMAN SIGURED OMANN, WHO WAS ACCORDINGLY SACRIFICED AND REPLACED BY GERT PETERSEN, 45, THE PARTY'S IDEOLOGUE AND FOREIGN POLICY EXPERT. PARTY CONGRESS ALSO ABANDONED TROIKA SYSTEM OF LEADERSHIP (OMANN, PETERSEN, AND LANGE HAD SHARED THE LEADERSHIP TITLE) IN FAVOR OF SINGLE ELECTED CHAIRMAN WITH APPOINTED VICE-CHAIRMEN (OLE HENRIKSEN AND RUTH OLSON, WOMEN'S RIGHTS ADVOCATE WERE SUBSEQUENTLY AMED VICE CHAIRMEN NY EXECUTIVE BOARD). ALTHOUGH TRADE UNION COMMITTEE WAS THUS FORMALLY GRANTED INCREASED INFLUENCE WITHIN PARTY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERSHIP WAS INCREASED FROM 32 TO 40, WHILE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PLACES ALLOTTED TO MPS REMAINED AT 5), THE CONGRESS DID NOT ACCEDE TO COMMITTEE'S DEMAND FOR CONTROL OF LABOR MARKET POLICY- DETERMINATION OF ALL POLICY WAS EXPRESSLY RESERVED TO EXECUTIVE BOARD.

5. SELECTION OF NEW PARTY CHAIRMAN AND CONGRESS OUTCOME -WHILE A COMPROMISE- REPRESENT A NEW POLICY ORIENTATION FOR SPP- A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY LABOR AGITATION AS A MEANS TO BUILD A STRONGER TRADE UNION BASE. THIS EMPHASIS CAN BE SEEN IN MORE RADICAL LINE TAKEN BY SPP PAPER MINAVISEN, UNDER NEW EDITOR, TORBEN KROGH (YOUNG, ANTI-AMERICAN FORMER EDITOR OF INFORMATION), AND CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 COPENH 01755 251743Z

IN ACTIVE ROLE SPP TRADE UNIONISTS AND PARTY LEADERS PLAYED IN SEVEN DAYS CRISIS IN MAY (BREWERY WORKERS LOCAL CHAIRMAN HOLGER FOSS WAS LEADER OF CHAIRMAN'S INITIATIVE" WHICH INSPIRED MASS WORKER DEMONSTRATIONS).

6. THIS NEW TACTIC APPEARS TO BE A CASE OF TOO SMALL A CONCESSION GRANTED TOO LATE, HOWEVER, AS SPP'S TRADE UNION STRONGHOLDS ARE PRESENTLY IN PROCESS OF DISSOLUTION. HIGHLY-REPUTED SPP LEADER OF HELSINGOR SHIPYARD WORKERS, GEORG POULSEN, DEFECTED TO SOCIAL DEMO-

CRATS IN EARLY MAY; WHILE BENT FJELLERAD, SPP REPRESENTATIVE AMONG COPENHAGEN SHIPBUILDERS, ATTEMPTED TO LEAD MASS DEFECTION OF HIS LOCAL SECTION TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY (DKP). FJELLERAD'S EFFORT WAS CHECKED AND HE HAS BEEN EXPELLED FROM EXECUTIVE BOARD.

7. COMMENT: THE CURRENT TROUBLES OF THE SPP ARE OF CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN PASSING POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE. THE SUCCESS OF THE DKP IN STEALING THE YOUNG, RADICAL INTELLECTUAL VOTE IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION WAS DAMAGING TO THE SPP, BUT NOT FATAL AS THAT VOTE IS HIGHLY VOLATILE

-SHIFTING PERIODICALLY AMONG THE PARTIES ON THE LEFT.

LOSS OF ITS TRADE UNION LEADERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, COULD SPELL THE END OF SPP VIABILITY AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, CONSTITUTE A SIGNAL THAT THE DKP WILL ASSUME A GREATER ROLE IN DANISH LABOR MOVEMENT POLITICS THAN IT HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN IN POSITION TO PLAY.

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